

## Speech and Language Therapy Support

Children with DLD across Whittington Health (schools in Camden, Islington and Haringey) may be able to access support from their local mainstream schools speech and language therapy department.

If you have any concerns about a child in your class who is experiencing significant difficulties with their understanding and use of language, please speak to your SENCo and/or your link Speech and Language Therapist.

For further information, search DLD on these websites:

AFASIC  
[www.afasic.org.uk](http://www.afasic.org.uk)

ICAN  
[www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)

Raising Awareness of DLD (RADLD)  
<https://en-gb.facebook.com/radld.page/>

## Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a question, compliment, comment or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or [whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net](mailto:whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net)

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please contact us on 020 7288 3182. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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# Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)

## Information leaflet for school staff



## What is Developmental Language Disorder?

Children and young people with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) have significant difficulties understanding and using spoken language.

A child or young person can be described as having DLD if their language difficulties:

- are having a significant impact on everyday life and progress in nursery/school
- are continuing despite support at home and nursery/school
- are likely to be longer-term

There is no known cause of DLD. However we know that it is **not** caused by:

- Parenting style
- Being bilingual
- Emotional difficulties
- Other medical conditions, such as hearing loss, Autism or severe learning difficulties

Children and young people with DLD may have other conditions such as ADHD or Dyslexia. The term DLD is used to describe a range of language difficulties experienced by children including that previously known as Specific Language Impairment (SLI). DLD affects around two children in every classroom and is more likely to affect boys than girls.

## How a child with DLD might present at school

Every child and young person with DLD is different. Children's needs will also change as they get older. However these are some of the things you may see in a child or young person with DLD:

- Finding it hard to focus in class, particularly when listening to lots of spoken information.
- Difficulty with following instructions and understanding questions including taking longer to process spoken and written information.
- Limited understanding and use of vocabulary.
- Difficulty with expressing themselves verbally, including finding the words they want to use and sequencing their ideas.
- Difficulty with social interaction including their ability to think flexibly, join in and work or play together with others, and understand puns, jokes, idioms, slang and non-literal language.
- Associated difficulties with reading and writing.

Some children and young people with behavioural or emotional difficulties may have unrecognised DLD. Possible language and communication difficulties should be considered for these children.

## What can I do to support them?

Children and young people with DLD do not acquire language as quickly and easily as others and need additional support and strategies to help them learn. Within a communication-friendly environment, children and young people with DLD can achieve well in school.

Adults can support children and young people by adapting their language and communication in the following ways:

- Presenting information more visually (pictures, symbols, photos or video) as well as providing opportunities to learn through practical experience.
- Using shorter instructions, simplifying questions, giving concrete examples of what they are talking about and explaining new words.
- Giving them more time to process language such as questions, instructions and time to form their own ideas. Use of a talk partner to discuss their idea with first before sharing with the rest of the class.
- Use of repetition and reinforcement of previous learning so they can remember and build on what they have learnt.
- Collaborative working e.g. setting joint targets and planning together to best meet the child or young person's individual needs.